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A

NOTES
ON
SHEPHERDS AND SHEEP.

A LETTER

TO

JOHN RUSKIN, ESQ., M.A.

BY

WILLIAM DYCE, M.A.,

ROYAL ACADEMICIAN;

PROFESSOR OF THE THEORY OF THE FINE ARTS, KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON.

"SI INTELLEXISTI SPIRITUALITER (VERBA CHRISTI) SPIRITUS ET VITA TIBI SUNT; SI
INTELLEXISTI CARNALITER, ETIAM SPIRITUS ET VITA SUNT, SED TIBI NON SUNT."—
S. AUGUST. TRACT XXVII.

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A LETTER.

MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,

I HAPPENED to be in the country when the newspaper advertisement of your "Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds," first caught my eye; and as for the time I was unable to procure a copy of the pamphlet, busy imagination, attracted by so unusual a title, straightway fell a guessing what relation this new production of yours might bear to the subject matter of your previous works. These guesses were assisted, though, it turns out, led into a wrong direction, by a bare notice accompanying the advertisement that the tract concerned the Church somehow.

Here is a man, I said to myself, who began by writing on the arts generally—who then undertook to elucidate the principles of one of the fine arts in particular: now, I suppose, he is going to favour us with his notions on the application of the latter to a special purpose—he is going to tell us how churches ought to be constructed. Judging by the title of the tract, I conclude that he has got hold of some notion about the construction and arrangement of a church, drawn from the Scripture representation of the Church itself as a flock of sheep.

Possessed of this idea, I promised myself some entertainment from the perusal of your work, and was prepared to accord all due praise to the fancy and eloquence which you were sure to display ; believing, however, all the time, that I should find your fancy and eloquence had been thrown away, because employed to strain an analogy into false conclusions.

I amused myself accordingly, by imagining, by way of answer to you, a number of treatises, all of which should tend to views equally one-sided. Each of them was to set forth a theory of the form and arrangement of a church, based on some one particular figure under which the Church is exhibited to us in Holy Writ. One, for example, was to be entitled, "Notes on the arrangement and culture of vineyards ;" because the Church is the "LORD'S vineyard." Another: "Notes on the pillar and its foundation ;" because the Church is "the pillar and ground of the truth." A third: "Notes on fishermen and fishing tackle ;" because the Apostles were "fishers of men" and the Church "a net." A fourth was to be: "Notes on temples ;" because the Church is "God's Holy Temple." A fifth: "Notes on palaces and government offices ;" because the Church is "the kingdom of God," and so on.

My imagination, however, greatly overshot the mark and led me astray. Yet the mistake was not unnatural ; for how should one ever dream of looking for an attempt to define and draw conclusions from the Scripture meaning of the word "Church" under such a title as "Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds?"

But I am not going to quarrel with the title of your pamphlet, which, however much it may be a misnomer, has had the effect of inducing me, and I suppose others like myself, to read a tract that might have

engaged less immediate notice under a more aptly chosen rubric. We shall have no quarrel about the title if we can agree on the matter contained under it, and on this I wish to converse with you a little.

The matter, as I have said, is not such as, considering the subjects of your previous works and the seeming relation of the title of this one to artistic questions, I was prepared to anticipate; yet as you address yourself, at the least, to the readers of your former productions, I shall assume this as an excuse (if any be needed) for entering with you on ground which possibly, though erroneously, may be considered foreign to the pursuits of an artist. You, at least, will not give in to the popular English absurdity of refusing to give a man the credit of doing more than one thing. You, at least, will not consider me disqualified from entering with you on theological ground by the fact of my being an artist, since both art and religion are subjects of equal interest and common to both of us; and if these pages should fall under the eyes of other classes of readers, I must simply shelter myself under the eminent examples which society now exhibits of clerical artists, and political, military, legal, and medical novel-writers, poets, and dissertators on theological, ecclesiastical and all other possible questions.

But to come to the matter in hand. Your object in the "Notes" is stated by you to be, "to limit the sense in which the word 'Church' should be understood, and to note one or two consequences which would result from the acceptance of such limitation." "It is high time," you say, "that *some* definition of the word should be agreed upon. I do not mean a definition involving the doctrine of this or that division of Christians, but limiting in a manner understood

by all of them, the sense in which the *word* should thenceforward be used." And then you proceed to notice that the word "Church" occurs in the New Testament about one hundred and fourteen times, bearing always "one and the same grand sense: that of a congregation or assembly of men;" bearing, nevertheless, "this sense under four different modifications, giving four separate meanings to the word." These are—

1. "The entire multitude of the elect," . . . from the beginning of time to the "consummation of all things."

2. "The entire multitude of professing believers in CHRIST existing on earth at a given moment.

3. "Any number of professed believers living in a certain city, place, or house.

4. "Any assembly of men."

The fourth of these meanings being, as you observe, "independent of all questions of a religious kind," and the second and third denoting merely the general or particular conditions of the Church in this world:—We have, according to your view, to deal solely with the first and second significations of the word.

Now it may, I suppose, be assumed that when you propose to "limit the sense in which the word 'Church' should be understood," you mean the sense in which it is to be understood and applied to the followers of CHRIST, living under the present dispensation, i.e., from the first to the second coming of the Messiah. I assume this, first, because the purpose of your tract implies it; and, secondly, because there is no dispute on any side respecting the meaning of the word "Church" when it is applied to the whole body of the faithful, *irrespective of their particular condition*, i.e., whether in earth or heaven,—before or after the

resurrection and the final judgment,—under the Jewish or Christian covenants. The whole question concerns the apostolic meaning of the word as it is applied to the followers of CHRIST under the present dispensation; if so, the inquiry will limit itself to the accuracy of the second meaning you assign to it. I accept that meaning; I agree that, to use your words, it is applied to “the entire multitude (or any particular section) of professing believers in CHRIST existing on earth at a given moment, including false brethren, wolves in sheep’s clothing, goats and tares as well as sheep and wheat, and other forms of bad fish with good in the net.”

So far, then, we are at one. “You desire,” you say, “only to address those who are willing to accept the apostolic sense of the word ‘Church,’ and with them you would endeavour to ascertain what consequences must follow from an acceptance of that apostolic sense.” Well; I consider myself addressed by you: for I am willing to accept that sense. Let us have your conclusions.

You wish to ascertain “what must be our first and most necessary conclusions from the common language of Scripture respecting these following points:—

“1. The distinctive character of the Church.

“2. The authority of the Church.

“3. The authority of the clergy over the Church.

“4. The connection of the Church with the State.”

“These,” you continue, “are four separate subjects of question; but we shall not have to put these questions in succession with each of the four scriptural meanings of the word ‘Church;’ for evidently its second and third meaning may be considered together as merely expressing the general or particular condi-

tions of the Visible Church, and the fourth signification is entirely independent of all questions of a religious kind. So that we shall only put the above inquiries successively respecting the Visible and Invisible Church; and as the two last, of authority of clergy and connection with State, can evidently only have reference to the Visible Church, we shall have in all these six questions to consider:—

- “ 1. The distinctive character of the Invisible Church.
- “ 2. The distinctive character of the Visible Church.
- “ 3. Authority of the Invisible Church.
- “ 4. Authority of the Visible Church.
- “ 5. Authority of clergy over the Visible Church.
- “ 6. Connection of the Visible Church with the State.”

Now, good friend Ruskin, before we can proceed to our “conclusions,” I want to come to an understanding with you on some terms and distinctions in the quotation I have just made. I wish you to tell me where you find any thing about “Visible” and “Invisible Church” in the New Testament, in the sense, I mean, in which you use the terms, i.e., as applied to the “multitude of professed believers in CHRIST existing in the world at any given time.”

As I said before, we have no question about the sense of the word “Church” when it signifies “the entire multitude of the elect, otherwise called the Body of CHRIST, and sometimes the Bride the Lamb’s wife, including the faithful in all ages, Adam and the children of Adam yet unborn.” The Church in this aspect has no *distinctive* character, no authority in faith or discipline, no clergy, no connection with the State. When therefore you speak of the “Visible and Invisible Church,” and inquire about its authority, its clergy, and its connection with the State, I conclude

that you are referring to a condition of the Church when there is scope for the exercise of its authority, when it stands in need of clergy, and when it exists in some mundane locality: that is to say, that you are speaking of the Church as it is in the world under the present dispensation; and I want to know when and where the Apostles make any such distinction as you have set up: I want to know where they say that the Churches they addressed were invisible.

The article of the Church of England, at which you cavil, says not a word, you will observe, about an *Invisible Church*. It asserts merely that the "Visible Church is a congregation of faithful men." In this I can see nothing of the "quick confusion between the Visible and Invisible Church, the needless and unaccountable confusion," which you attribute to it. It is you who create the confusion, not the article; which is perfectly distinct and consonant to Scripture in its assertion. It says nothing whatever of the Church in the aggregate,—of the Church contemplated as already perfected in CHRIST; it speaks solely of the Church which is visible,—"militant here on earth,"—the Church in a certain condition, i.e., in its condition of trial in this life; in which condition it is essential to it, as the article proceeds to define, that "the pure word of God be preached and the sacraments be duly ministered according to CHRIST's ordinance."

No confusion in this. But you say there is, because "evidently the Church, which is composed of faithful men, is the one true, indivisible, and indiscernible Church, built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, JESUS CHRIST Himself being the chief corner stone. It includes all who have ever fallen asleep in CHRIST and all yet unborn, who are yet to be saved in Him."

Well ; but if it includes all this, it includes more than the article bargained for. The Church, in the sense of the article, is "a congregation of faithful men in which the pure word of God is preached and the sacraments ministered according to CHRIST's ordinance," not a congregation of faithful men, of whom myriads are placed beyond all necessity of preaching and sacraments. Nothing can be clearer than that the definition of "the Church" in the Nineteenth Article is limited in its application to the "congregation of faithful men" in this life. If, then, you assert that the congregation of the faithful in this life is invisible, you contradict the article ; if, on the other hand, your assertion has reference to the whole body of CHRIST's Church from the beginning to the end of time, you are creating the very confusion of the Visible and Invisible Church which you attribute to the article. Whatever be the value of your assertion, it is nothing to the purpose ; for the article speaks only of the Church as it exists under the ministry of the word and sacraments : i.e., of the Visible Church, which it asserts to be a "congregation of faithful men."

Let me come, however, to the gist of your objection to the terms of the article. If I mistake not, it is this : first, as you think it "impossible except for God to see faith or to know a faithful man by sight," it is absurd to term the Church a "*visible*" congregation of faithful men,—faithful men being, in your opinion, *invisible* ; and, secondly, as "half the baptized people" (i.e., half of those who profess the faith of CHRIST) "are" (so you say) "very visible rogues, believing neither in God nor devil,"—it is equally absurd to term the Visible Church a congregation of "*faithful*" men, seeing half its members are, in your judgment, *unfaithful* men.

Strange form of objection ! one half of which contradicts the other. Surely, if you possess a rule which is competent to detect the *unfaithfulness* of one half of CHRIST's professed followers, it must of necessity be also a test of *fidelity* in the other half. "I had not known lust (i. e. I had not known it to be lust) except that the law had said ; Thou shalt not covet." You can discern *unfaithfulness* only by knowing first, in what *faithfulness* consists. The very same rule which enables you to condemn some, forces you by that very judgment to acquit others ; and if this judgment be *in foro exteriori* as it concerns *unfaithful men*, so must it also be in the case of *faithful men*. Faithful men, therefore, are known to be such by a judgment *in foro exteriori* ; and "the congregation of faithful men," i. e. "the Church militant," is properly termed visible.

The extent to which this judgment is identical with a judgment *in foro conscientiae*, (if we were able to pronounce it, which we are not,) is another question : for the present, it is sufficient for me to evince that the rule admitted by yourself, establishes the *visibility* of "the congregation of faithful men."

But there is the other half of your objection. You think it absurd to term the visible Church a congregation of *faithful men*, because a large proportion of its professing members are visibly *unfaithful*. To this I reply ; faithfulness to CHRIST is either the acknowledged and professed rule in the visible Church, or it is not ; but we cannot suppose the existence of the Church without such a rule ; it follows therefore, that the visible Church is properly described as "a congregation of faithful men."

If you choose, indeed, you are at liberty to omit from the article both the word "visible" before

“Church,” and the word “faithful” before “men;” but you would gain nothing thereby. Supposing we say, “The Church is a congregation of men in which the pure word of God is preached, and the Sacraments ministered according to CHRIST’S ordinance;” it is clear, that preaching the truth, and right administration of Sacraments, imply both the *faith* and the *visibility* of the congregation.

But let us consider whether your views are borne out by the “common language of Scripture.” You assert in the broadest manner: “observe,” you say, as if there was no question of it, “observe that S. Paul and the rest of the Apostles write nearly all their Epistles to the invisible Church.”

Now, as the Apostles never say they did, you must, I imagine, have formed that opinion by some process of reasoning like the following:—the visible Church consists of true and false brethren, wheat and tares, sheep and goats, good fish and bad; but those whom the Apostles addressed are termed by them, “Beloved of God;” “Saints;” “faithful brethren;” “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, &c.,” and these titles are not truly applicable to the visible Church; it follows therefore, that the Apostles addressed their Epistles to the Invisible Church.

This, I conjecture, is the reasoning on which your assertion is based. It is the objection to the terms of the Nineteenth Article in a different form. In the one case, you stumbled at the use of the term “visible Church,” in reference to a “congregation of *faithful* men:” “faithful” men being, as you think, invisible. In the other, you conclude that certain Epistles which are addressed to “congregations of faithful men,” are on that account addressed to the Invisible Church.

Why you should except any of the Epistles from this conclusion I do not clearly see. For, although S. Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians, (which you say is written to the *visible* Church) addresses them simply as the "Churches of Galatia," yet he tells them that they were all of them "children of God by faith in CHRIST JESUS," and that "as many of them as had been baptized into CHRIST," (which was the whole of them, I presume,) "had put on CHRIST," and were "heirs according to the promise." Besides, S. Peter, (1 Ep. i. 1, 2,) some very few years before,* had addressed these Galatians, among others, as "Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the Blood of JESUS CHRIST."

The question, however, turns on the precise sense in which we are to understand the expressions at the commencement of the Apostolical letters addressed to Churches. To arrive at this, we may either inquire into the exact force of each particular epithet or characteristic considered by itself; or examine the relation which, either singly, or together, they bear to the context: how far they are modified by subsequent statements and qualifications.

When, for example, we find a particular Church addressed as the "Elect," are we to understand the term as predicating any thing for certain of the final condition of the members of that Church? Are we to look upon their "election" as a declared fact, or as a future possibility? Are they declared to be the

* There is some uncertainty as to the date of S. Peter's first Epistle; but the argument will not be affected if we adopt the opinion of those who assign to it a date later, by two or three years, than that of S. Paul's letter to the Galatians.

“Elect” unconditionally, or only contingently on their perseverance in faith and obedience? If the former, we convert the Apostolic epithets of “called to be saints,” “elect, according to the foreknowledge of God,” into announcements of the eternal and secret decrees of God, with respect to the final state of those whom they addressed, which cannot be admitted. If the latter, the epithets are applicable, and were applied by the Apostles to the visible Church.

But you may reply: the Apostles knew that the Churches they addressed consisted of true and false brethren; and although unable to distinguish the true brethren from the false, they must have meant to limit the application of the epithets they employed to those who merited such titles; that is to say, to the “Invisible Church.” To which I answer, that the question is not, what the Apostles meant, but what they did; and if they addressed Churches, as “elect,” which consisted, and which they knew to consist, of true and false brethren, they so addressed visible Churches.

How in truth could they do otherwise? *Predestinatio nihil ponit in predestinatis nisi effectum ejus*: as the schoolmen say. The elect are not elect in fact till the event proves them to be so. God’s predestination is His eternal purpose, that such and such things shall be accomplished in time; but the things to be done in time, have no temporal existence or being, until the time comes for their being done. Thus, though it was decreed that you were to be an Oxford Graduate, since we see you to be one, yet you were not so till you took your degree. An elect person must, as you say, be saved; but he cannot be known to be an elect person till he is saved. It is simply impossible, therefore, that the Apostles should have declared any of the

Churches or individuals to be "elect" otherwise than conditionally, i. e., on general grounds of hope, based on the promises of CHRIST, and on the evidences of faith and obedience on the part of the Churches and individuals.

I think, however, that if the epithets themselves be well weighed in their relation to one another, and the general drift of the Apostolic writings, we must come to the conclusion, that they were applied simply to the visible Church, and for that very reason, have, (if one may use the expression) an *exoteric* as well as an *esoteric* meaning; a lower and a higher, a *literal* and a *spiritual* sense.

Let us consider some of the headings of Epistles said by you to be addressed to the Invisible Church. A common one for example, is: To "the called to be saints," or rather to "the called saints," κλητοῖς ἁγίοις: as in Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 2; and elsewhere. Or simply "the called," οἱ κλητοὶ: as in S. Jude 1; τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις κλητοῖς, "to the sanctified the called." Now, considering the opposition drawn between the "called" and the "chosen," κλητοὶ, ἐκλεκτοὶ, in the Parables of the "Labourers in the vineyard," and the "Marriage of the king's son," I think you will admit that the title οἱ κλητοὶ is applicable to the visible Church. S. Paul terms himself a "called Apostle," κλητὸς ἀπόστολος: and yet he speaks of the possibility of his being finally a "castaway;" and Judas Iscariot, who was a "cast-away," was also a "called Apostle."

But now, we find the κλησις, the "calling,"—a term which is used first to signify in a general way the *status* of the called, and secondly, the final cause of their being called, viz. their salvation,—dignified in the first sense, with high attributes proper to ἐκλογῇ,

“election ;” and in the second sense, identified with it.

In one class of passages, the *καλῆσις*, or “calling” simply signifies the *status* of the called ; as in 1 Cor. i. 26, “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called.” And Ephes. iv. 1, “I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.” And verse 4, “There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.”

In another, the “calling” has certain attributes, proper to “election,” as Heb. iii. 1, “Heavenly calling ;” 2 Tim. i. 9, “Holy calling,” and so on.

In a third, “calling” and “election” seem to be identified, and the former used to signify the end of the “calling,” i. e., Salvation, as in 2 Tim. i. 9, “Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in CHRIST JESUS before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST,” &c. And Eph. i. 2, “According as *He hath chosen us* in Him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children.” . . . Verse 11, “In whom also *we have obtained an inheritance*, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.” . . . Verse 15—18, “Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the LORD JESUS,” (hitherto he has spoken generally of the hopes and privileges of the Church ; now when he comes to the case of the Ephesians in particular his discourse as-

sumes an *optative* form;) "after I heard of your faith in the LORD JESUS, and love to all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the GOD of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Father of Glory, *may give unto you* the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that *ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.*" And 2 S. Peter i. 10, "Wherefore, the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your *calling and election sure.*" A remarkable passage, which, as Hammond, (Annot. in loc.) truly remarks, can neither refer to the assuring of ourselves that we are elected, which we cannot know but by the event, nor to God's predestination, since it is immutable; but only to our qualifying ourselves by diligence with a capacity of receiving God's promises and the privileges of our calling, and thereby removing the hindrances which would keep them from being actually beneficial to us, and so render them "sure," that is, effectual to the good of our souls. Hence the Apostle adds, "for if ye do these things," (viz. "if," as he had before said, "ye give all diligence to add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance," and the rest) "ye shall never fall;" implying of course, that if they did not do these things, they should miscarry and fail of obtaining the "exceeding great and precious promises" i. e., the things promised.

If we turn, now, from the "calling" to the "called," we shall find the case analogous. Those who are called with a "holy," and "heavenly calling," are as a matter of course termed "holy brethren," "called saints," "sanctified in CHRIST JESUS," "beloved of

God." If we have on the one hand the "calling" spoken of as if it were "election," and "election as if it were only a contingency, so on the other, we have the "called" and the "elect" identified, and the "elect" only conditionally elect.

But these epithets have also, as I have noticed, an *exoteric* sense: an external and literal signification. Perhaps it is but lost labour to urge this view of the matter with a man who is bold enough to characterize as an absurdity the article of belief on which it is based. "It has," you say, "been ingeniously and plausibly endeavoured to make Baptism a sign of admission into the Visible Church; but *absurdly enough*." But whatever the amount of ingenuity and plausibility which have accompanied the endeavour, it must be admitted, that the result has been pretty complete unanimity among all Christian sects, who with scarcely an exception, however great their differences in other respects, are at one on this point. Besides, I think you ought to have known that Baptism, as the symbol of admission to a society or religion, is not even peculiar to Christianity. However much more Baptism might be as a Christian Sacrament, both Jews and Gentiles would have seen, and in fact did see, in it the ceremony of initiation,—the sign of admission to membership, and the privileges of the body who used it.

Now, considered in this lowest point of view, the epithets employed by the Apostles are literally applicable to the visible Church. The very terms "elect," "sanctified," "called," "beloved," "holy," are customary forms of expression about persons or things set apart and dedicated to God, and that too, without regard to the intrinsic character of the persons or things so dedicated, and only in respect to the ceremony of de-

dication and its symbolical significancy. What I mean to say is, that as Baptism (whatever else it may be or do) symbolizes the commencement of a new life, and admission to the privileges and hopes of CHRIST'S disciples, the epithets used by the Apostles descriptive of the spiritual fruits of Baptism and Church-membership, are such as not only admit of application to the reception of the outward ordinance, but are based on the fact of its having been received.

It is nothing to the purpose, to say that a man may be spiritually cleansed and risen with CHRIST, without the use of outward washing with water. The old divines, you know, held that there were three kinds of Baptism: viz., *Baptisma flaminis, fluminis, et sanguinis*; two of them being exceptional cases: but we are not now dealing with exceptions. It is a rule we are in search of. I want you to inquire with me, whether the Apostles, when they addressed any as possessors of the spiritual life, the character, and the privileges symbolized by Baptism, did not invariably connect that possession with the previous use of the symbol.

The Ephesians, for instance, were, according to you, an invisible Church. What, then, do the following passages mean? "There is one *Body* and one *Spirit*, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. One LORD, one faith, one *Baptism*." In your view, I suppose, "*one Body*" means the whole multitude,—the *totality* of the Invisible Church; but if so, what does "*one Spirit*" mean? and *one Baptism*? and the reference to their "calling?" If "*one Spirit*" means also the *totality* of the Invisible Church, I think it will follow either, that there are two totalities of the Invisible Church, which sounds very like nonsense,

or that "Body" and "Spirit" together make up the totality of the "Invisible Church"; but how then shall we deal with the "one Baptism?" If this, which you call the Invisible Church, has a body and spirit, the Baptism surely must also be, at the least, outward; and so the Church of which S. Paul speaks can be no other than the visible. This is so plain, that Hammond paraphrases the passage in the following words: "That as ye are one society, one body of Christians, so ye may have one soul, as it were the spirit of love, to animate that body, according to that one aim (in which you all conspire, and to the obtaining of which Christianity gives you all the same pretension and hope), viz., eternal life. And according as ye have but one Master, whose commands ye are bound to obey, one body of Creed to be believed by all, and *the same form of initiation*, the same vow of Baptism appointed to be administered to all."

Or take Romans vi. 3, 4: "Know ye not that so many of us as were Baptized into JESUS CHRIST, were Baptized into His death?" In other words,—Forasmuch as *all of us* have been Baptized into the death of CHRIST, "therefore," he continues, "we are buried with Him by Baptism unto death; that like as CHRIST was raised up from the dead by the glory of the FATHER, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Parallel to this is Col. ii. 12: "Buried with Him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of GOD, who hath raised Him from the dead."

Now as all the Romans to whom the Apostle wrote, had been baptized, they were all of them addressed by the words, "To all that be in Rome, beloved of GOD, called to be saints;" and though you consider the

notion of seeing faith to be very ridiculous, yet S. Paul thanks God that the faith of these Romans was spoken of throughout the whole world: so that it must have manifested itself pretty clearly—if not visibly, at least audibly:—according to S. Paul's own rule: "*If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the LORD JESUS, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*"

Or take S. Peter's words, which are greatly in point. (1 S. Pet. iii. 20, 21.) This epistle, you will observe, is addressed to the "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God," yet he ascribes their salvation to Baptism. "The like" (or rather the "opposite") "figure whereunto," he says, "*even Baptism doth now save us by the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the dead;*" adding parenthetically that it was not the outward washing *alone* that saved them. So much for your notion of an Invisible Church, which is not also visible.

But now we have another question to consider, before we can proceed to draw conclusions, from "the Apostolic sense of the word Church." "There are two texts," you say, "in which if the word had alone occurred, its meaning might have been doubtful. These are S. Matt. xvi. 18, and xviii. 17.* The absurdity of founding any doctrine upon the inexpressibly minute possibility that in these two texts, the word might have been used with a different meaning from that which it bore in all the others, coupled with

* "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, &c."

"And if he neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church, &c."

the assumption that the meaning was this or that, is self-evident: it is not so much a religious error as a philological solecism, unparalleled," so far as you know, "in any other science but that of divinity. Nor is it ever," you think, "committed with open front by Protestants. No English divine, asked in a straightforward manner for a Scriptural definition of the word 'Church,' would be bold enough to answer 'the Clergy.'"

No, nor any Roman either. An English divine would, I imagine, say that "the Church is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments ministered according to CHRIST's ordinance;" and a Roman would reply something to this effect: "*Ecclesia societas est hominum viatorum et baptisatorum, unius fidei Christianæ externâ professione et eorundem sacramentorum participatione conjunctorum, legitimis pastoribus subjectorum.*" Definitions which come pretty much to the same thing; both of them attaching to the idea of the Church a something which your "Apostolic sense of the word" does not seem to include. Neither of them, however, affirms that the "Church" is the "Clergy;" and as to those people who speak of "such an one going into the Church," I fancy they no more dream of the Clergy being the Church, than they imply when they say, "Such an one is going into the navy," that the officers of the navy are common seamen and copper-bottomed vessels.

But although nobody that I ever heard of imagines the Church to mean exclusively the Clergy; yet the two definitions I have given, seem somehow to imply, that although the Clergy are not the Church, yet the Church is not the Church without the Clergy. Let

us, then, revise our "Apostolic sense of the word Church;" and inquire whether Scripture throws any further light on the subject.

I am not going to question the accuracy of the meaning we have already attached to the word. The Church is still to be "the whole body or any section, of the professed followers of CHRIST at any time existing on earth;" but I want to ascertain some particulars about this body; for obviously a definition of this kind is little more than nominal: scarcely any conclusion of a practical kind can be drawn from it. Supposing us to have no dispute whatever about the fact that, with the Apostles, the word "Church," uniformly "bears one and the same grand sense; that of a congregation or assembly of men," we have still to agree on the particulars which range themselves under this "grand sense." For instance, when we say, "The English nation is a people inhabiting the southern part of an island, called Great Britain, who, once on a time, went to war with the Dutch:"—We employ the term "English nation" in the same grand sense in both members of the sentence; but it does not follow that because "nation" or "people" in the first half of the sentence signified all the individuals of the nation, it does so in the second, unless it be assumed that one nation cannot go to war with another except *en masse*.

Or again, if we say, "The English people have great respect for the laws which they frame and revise from time to time;" it does not follow that all the individuals of the English people frame and revise the laws which, as individuals, they all greatly respect. There is such a thing as the rule *qui facit per alterum*, &c. in the organization and actings of all secular

societies and commonwealths ; such a thing as division into representatives and represented ; into framers and administrators of laws, and subjects to laws ; into governors and governed ; and that without detriment to the unity of such societies and their homogeneity in other respects. We live, for example, under a monarchy which is not elective ; we have a peerage, an integral part of the legislature, which is hereditary : yet nobody in his senses would affirm that when we speak of the "English Nation," we exclude the Sovereign and the House of Peers. Comprehensive descriptions of societies or nations, in fact, however much they may include, exclude nothing that is not positively excluded by them either implicitly or explicitly.

Supposing, then, I repeat, we had no dispute whatever about the fact that in the Apostolic writings the word "Church" always bears the same grand sense,— "that of a congregation or assembly of men," we are pretty much where we were.

This "Apostolic sense of the word," gives us no insight whatever into the questions you proposed for consideration. On the particular manner in which the Church is governed, and its authority in doctrine and discipline, it says not a word. Our "Apostolic sense" will admit equally well any form of government or no government—any kind of authority in doctrine and discipline, or no kind at all. It neither supposes the necessity of Clergy, nor does it exclude them. As it excludes nothing, so it may include anything on such points.

When, therefore, you assume that, because the word "Church" is used by the Apostles always in the grand sense, the authority of the Church is common to all members of it, you are taking for granted some-

thing about which "the Apostolic sense of the word Church" gives us no hint. Your assumption may be tenable; but if it be, it must be established on other grounds. I am equally at liberty to assume that the authority of the Church resides in the Pope, or in a committee of the House of Commons. We are not a whit more warranted in concluding that Church authority resides in the Clergy, than that it does so in the laity, from a description of the Church, which does not even suppose the existence of any authority, much less of a distinction between Clergy and laity. So far as we have gone, the only distinction it sets up is a moral one, i.e., between true and false professors of the doctrine of the Gospel: I want, then, to ascertain whether other differences may not be comprehended under the word "Church" "in the grand sense;" and that, not by way of deduction from definitions, or by drawing out analogies and figurative expressions like telescopes, but by reference to the source from whence we gained our Apostolical use of the word "Church" "in the grand sense."

Admitting that in Apostolical writ, the word "Church" always signifies the "Church," and nothing else, and that the Church is an assembly or congregation, composed, in this world, of true and false professing believers in CHRIST; we have still to inquire whether Scripture tells us anything farther about the composition of this assembly.

You yourself, shall afford us an entrance into the inquiry. On the question of the authority of the Church "to declare doctrine," your argumentation is to this effect:—true doctrine may be gathered, first, from the concurrent belief of members of the "Invisible Church" "at the time of their deaths;" and

secondly, from the opinions and belief of the Visible Church ; but we do not know who are members of the Invisible Church, and we cannot trust members of the Visible Church :—"There is, therefore," you conclude," in matters of doctrine, "*no such thing* as the authority of the Church." . . . "We might as well talk of the authority of a flock of sheep, for the Church is a body to be taught and fed, not to teach and feed." . . .

On this strange jumble, I remark, first, that the inquiry was not whether true doctrine was ascertainable according to a method proposed by you, but whether the Church had any authority to "declare true doctrine;" secondly, that your conclusion does not follow from your premises. It does not follow either, that true doctrine cannot be known for certain, or that the Church has no authority to declare it, because you are unable to discover true doctrine by the particular method you suggest ;—since first, there may be other methods, and so yours not the true one ; and secondly, it is begging the question to put yourself in the position of the authority we are in search of. I remark in the third place, that your illustration about a flock of sheep, implicitly contradicts the conclusion it illustrates. If the Church be a "body," like a flock of sheep, "to be taught and fed, not to teach and feed," I should like to know first, how you make the existence of an authority "to declare doctrine," depend on the possibility of our discovering, what true doctrine is, from those who, by the supposition, are *not teachers* but *taught* ; and secondly, how this teaching and feeding of the Church is to be accomplished without teachers and pastors ? If there are teachers and pastors of the Church, have they any authority

to teach and feed? If they have, we have arrived, after all, at something like an authority "to declare doctrine;" we have got a new particular to be comprehended under our Apostolic use of the word "Church" in the grand sense.

Of course, we are agreed that there is one great "Shepherd and Bishop of souls," whose flock is the whole body of the faithful from the beginning to the end of time; but we must not make sacrifice of one Scripture at the shrine of another. When we read such a text as this: "Take heed unto yourselves, and unto *all the flock* over the which the HOLY GHOST hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own Blood," (Acts xx. 28,) we must be very bold, indeed, to doubt the compatibility of the care exercised by the "Good Shepherd" over all His flock, in whatever condition they may be, with superintendence of other pastors appointed by Himself over that portion of His flock which is in this world.

It may be very absurd, as you say, to talk of the AUTHORITY OF *a flock of sheep*, but, with this text staring one in the face, we should show little regard to the "Apostolic sense of the word Church," if we reckoned it absurd to talk of the AUTHORITY OVER *a flock of sheep*; for here it is plainly and unmistakeably declared by S. Paul to the Presbyters of Ephesus, that they had been, by the HOLY GHOST, made overseers and pastors of the flock of CHRIST in that place. The men so appointed, had, I imagine, an "authority to declare doctrine," which was not based on the possibility of discovering true doctrine in the way you propose. This passage does not stand alone; and, unless the case of the Ephesian Church was exceptional, which

cannot be proved, we are compelled, I think, to draw these two inferences ; first, that the Apostolic sense of the word ‘ Church,’ embraces under that one name, the distinction of shepherds and sheep,—of teachers and taught,—of overseers and overseen ;” and secondly, that the authority to teach and feed, or as you express it, “ to declare doctrine,” is vested in the teachers and pastors who are made such by the HOLY GHOST.

Who the men are that are so made, and whether their authority involves infallibility, under any and what circumstances, in the subject matter of their teaching, are separate and subsequent questions. You may, if you choose, deny that there are now any pastors and teachers of the Church, made such by the HOLY GHOST ; but then, you must cease to apply the Apostolic sense of the word Church to such a case ; since it is undeniable, that these divinely appointed pastors were comprehended under that “ Apostolic sense.”

I say it is undeniable ; but I might have said, that nobody on any side denies it. There is a question between Presbyterians and Episcopalians, whether the Clergy appointed by the Apostles, were Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, or Presbyters and Deacons only ; and between the Church of England, and the Church of Rome, whether S. Peter was Primate of the Apostles, and on the consequences of that Primacy, if it ever existed ; but nobody doubts that the Apostolic Church was founded and governed by divinely appointed overseers :—these overseers being first, Apostles chosen and sent by our LORD Himself : secondly, those whom they appointed to oversee Churches, either along with them or in their absence ; and thirdly, Deacons. This, I say, cannot be called in question.* It is a matter of

* How far the possession of miraculous powers and gifts by in-

fact, that the Apostolical Church consisted of *prælati* and *subditi*, or reversing it if you will, of *ministers* and *those to whom they ministered* ; and being a fact, the “Apostolical sense of the word Church” must have supposed it ; just as the words “English nation,” used with reference to any particular period of its history, imply all the characteristics of the nation then existing.

If you think the employment of such a term as “the authority of the Church” inconsistent with the supposition, that such authority is vested in the Clergy, I can only refer you to the fact that although it was so vested in the Apostolic Church, the Apostles nevertheless reckoned the decisions of the Clergy to be the decisions of the Church and called them so. This is clear from the notable instance of the Council held at Jerusalem under the Apostles, of which we read in their Acts, chap. XV. The story, as you know, was this:—When Paul and Barnabas were at Antioch, certain Jewish proselytes endeavoured to persuade the Gentile converts that they must be circumcised, and keep the law of Moses. This led to much discussion and disputation ; and, in the end, to the mission of Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem to consult about the question. “When they were come to Jerusalem they were received of THE CHURCH and of the Apostles and Elders” “And the APOSTLES AND ELDERS came together for to consider of this matter”

Now, observe, that although the Apostles and the Elders *only* came together, the result of their deliberation is attributed to the Church. “It pleased the

dividuals conferred a right to overstep the ordinary constitution of the Church in particular cases, is a question which we need not trouble ourselves with, as I imagine it cannot be settled.

Apostles and Elders with the whole Church to send certain chosen men of their company," with letters to Antioch containing their decision. The letters are likewise in the name of the Church: "The Apostles and Elders, and *brethren* send greeting." Not that any but Apostles and Elders had a voice in the decision; for, only "the Apostles and Elders came together for to consider of this matter;"—but that the Church joined with them, giving their consent and approbation;—just as, in later times, laymen have subscribed acts of councils in the form: *consentiens subscripsi*. And though the style of the decree: "Forasmuch as we have heard," &c. seems to include all, i.e. the whole Church at Jerusalem, named in the heading, and virtually did so, yet in chap. XVI. 4, the decrees, *δόγματα*, are simply termed, "the decrees which were ordained by the Apostles and Elders which were at Jerusalem."

You may make it a question if you please, how far and in what respects, the "Apostolical sense of the word Church," (which is in fact only a short term for designating the facts and characteristics of the Church as it existed under the Apostles) is applicable to this or any subsequent period; but we must not draw inferences from a definition which is all but nominal. We must not assume that because the Apostles termed the Church a congregation, it is a congregation, and nothing more.

I am afraid, then, that I cannot follow you into your conclusions; which, if they are to be worth a straw, must be drawn from things, not names. When we have ascertained what, in all respects, that was, to which the Apostles applied the name of Church, we shall then, and not till then, be in a condition to note

"the consequences which follow from an acceptance of the Apostolic sense of the word."

After all, notwithstanding your flourish about the necessity of abiding by Scripture and "the Apostolic sense of the word Church," I doubt whether you are not more disposed to embrace the *word* "Church" in a general sense, than the *thing* "Church," as it was in fact. I have doubts whether your scheme for adopting the *general* Apostolic sense, does not cover a real distaste for the *particular* Apostolic sense which facts establish. Here is a place suggestive of such doubts. "As for the passages," you say, (p. 25,) "in the ordering of Priests," and "Visitation of the Sick," respecting Absolution, they are "evidently pure Romanism. . . ." As they occur in the Prayer Book I suppose they are also pure Anglicanism; but let that pass. We must, however, grant that the "Apostolic sense of the word Church," implied the use of formularies identical with those which you term "pure Romanism." Indeed you anticipate a retort of this kind; for you continue, "It is indeed true, that CHRIST promised absolving power to His Apostles: He also promised to those who believed that they should take up serpents, and if they drank any deadly thing it should not hurt them. His words were fulfilled literally; but those who would extend their force beyond the Apostolic times, must extend both promises or neither."

Well; and what if we do extend both promises?

Why, then, I suppose, you will say we assume an untenable position; for none of those signs now "follow them that believe;" evidently therefore, one of the promises cannot be extended beyond the Apostolic times, and so we have no right to assume that the other does. Bad logic, good friend Ruskin: bad

logic. "If thou hast faith as a grain of mustard seed, thou shalt say to this mountain, Be thou removed and cast into the sea, and it shall be done." But if the mountain will not move at my bidding, what follows? That the promise is false? No, only that it does "not extend" to me. And why? because it has ceased to extend to anybody? No, only, I imagine, because I have not fulfilled the sole condition on which it could extend to me or any body else; viz. because I "have not faith as a grain of mustard seed."

The promise of immunity from "perils" by serpents and deadly things, has a condition attached to it. It is made to faith: a kind of faith too, which S. Paul does not make much account of; but the "absolving power" was *given*, not *promised*, to the Apostles; and there was no condition attached to it that I can discover, so far at least as they were concerned. It was not made dependent on their faith; nor can I find that its exercise implied the smallest power to "search the hearts" of those whose sins they were to remit. For all that appears, it was not a miraculous power they possessed, but an authority necessarily limited by the condition under which all blessings are conveyed to the Church instrumentally, viz. aptitude in the recipient.

If you are dissatisfied with the notion, that the "absolving power" should be so limited, I cannot help it. It is plainly impossible to concede even to Apostles, either the divine prerogative of searching hearts, or power to remit the sins of impenitent sinners. If you cannot reconcile these two conditions with the existence of an authority to remit sins, your sneer at the "upper order of Church officers, licensed to tell the congregation from the reading desk what (for the rest)

they might, one would think, have known without being told ; that ‘ God pardoneth all them that truly repent,’ ” will equally well apply to the Apostles and the Apostolic Church, who, it is reasonable to think, must have been pretty well informed respecting the conditions under which God pardons sinners.

But perhaps we may find in the exercise of the Apostolic authority to remit and retain sins, something analogous to the manner of their addressing the Churches to which they wrote epistles. The event, I fear, proved that some of those whom they termed “ elect,” “ beloved of God,” and “ saints,” deserved such titles only in an external sense ; but the titles were not the less true and truly applied to the Church, though, to some members of it, they were only as husks without kernels.

Take, now, another characteristic of the Church in the Apostolic sense, which seems to bear an uncomfortable aspect towards your conclusions. You say, it is a great mistake to imagine, that because a man is in Orders he has on that account any peculiar character of sanctity which the laity do not or may not possess : for, that all, both Clergy and laity, are equally Priests,—all “ equally bound to the service of the Head of the Church ; and that service is pre-eminently the saving of souls,” and that all are to preach directly or indirectly. “ So that,” you conclude, “ the only difference between a Church officer and a lay member, is either a wider degree of authority given to the former, as apparently a wiser and better man, or a special appointment to some office more easily discharged by one person than by many : as for instance, the serving of tables by the deacons,

the authority or appointment being signified by a marked separation from the rest of the Church, and the privilege or power of being maintained by the rest of the Church”

It may be, as you seem to hint it is, a common mistake to attribute greater personal holiness to the Clergy than to the laity. Whether it is a mistake or not, depends on the fact: and for my part, I really do not know, nor does any body else, whether the balance of personal holiness is now, or has been at any time, in favour of the Clergy or laity; but when you tell me that the “idea of any peculiar sanctification belonging to the Clergy never entered the Apostles’ minds,” and that there is no difference between a Clergyman and a layman, except that the former has wider authority, and is or may be a wiser or better man, I must fall back on “the Apostolical sense of the word Church.” The text already quoted, “Take heed to the flock over which *the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers*,” will not, I fear, apply to both Clergy and laity of the Ephesian Church. All could not be overseers, else there would be nobody left for them to oversee; so I suppose we must conclude, that some only were overseers and pastors, and those doubtless were wise and good men; but we can scarcely say that they had a wider authority than those who had none at all of the same kind, nor can we reject “the idea of any peculiar sanctification belonging” to these Clergy, since it was by the *Holy Ghost* that they were made overseers and pastors.

Whether the Apostles and Clergy were “Priests,” is a question which turns on the meaning we attach to the word; but on that I shall not enter. Suffice it to

remark, that your observation about the one Priesthood of CHRIST and the Priesthood of all Christians, either proves too much, or nothing at all. If the Priesthood of CHRIST be (as I at once concede) the only Priesthood properly so called,* it follows, and truly too, that there was no real Priesthood among the Jews, whose whole ceremonial pointed to, and received prospectively, any efficacy it possessed, from the one Priesthood and Mediatorship of CHRIST. If, on the other hand, it follows, that there cannot be any Christian Priesthood in the visible Church distinct from that possessed by all members of it, because all of them are Priests "who offer spiritual sacrifices," it would also follow, that there could not have been any separate Priesthood amongst the Jews, because the whole nation was "a kingdom of Priests." (Exod. xix. 6.)

Equally remarkable is the logic of the following passage. "The Church is built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, JESUS CHRIST Himself being the chief corner stone. Well, we cannot have two foundations, so we can have no more Apostles nor Prophets;" which is just as if a man were to say, "Here is a house built on a foundation of twelve bricks; well; as we cannot have two foundations, so we cannot have any more bricks used in the building." But I suppose it never occurred to you that, in point of fact, the Church, in the "Apostolic sense of the

* "(To speak after the exact manner of divinity) there is but one only Sacrifice, *veri nominis*, properly so called: that is CHRIST's death. And that sacrifice but once actually performed at His death: but ever before represented in figure from the beginning: and ever since repeated in memory to the world's end. That only absolute: all else relative to it, representative of it, operative by it."—*Bishop Andrewes' Sermon of the Resurrection.*—No. 7.

word," though it did not admit of more Apostles than twelve for its foundation, did admit more than that number for its edification.

Trusting to your forgiveness, if, in any thing I have said, I have overstepped the bounds of charity and goodwill,

I remain,

Your faithful Servant,

W. DYCE.

2, *Fitzroy Square*,

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